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## Opera and the Art of Singing.

BY CARL GLOGGNER-CASTELLI.

[Continued from page 17.]

### III.

With the entrance of the Meyerbeer period, then, the taste of the great public was at length decidedly diverted from its exclusive idolatry for the Italian opera. Even the mass began to strip off the fetters of long habit, and give room to the thought that it is really absurd to "go to death" with trills and variations. Meyerbeer sought truth of expression in the union of all the means afforded by an effective manner of singing, and an expanded and finely elaborated instrumentation. His *cantilena* is of thrilling effect, the more so that he understands how to treat the human voice in an exceedingly effective manner. To be sure he has not troubled himself to inquire how long the singer can endure the exertions which he demands of him. His operas are nearly as long again as the Italian; he requires of the voice a compass, a richness throughout, even in the highest registers, a power of endurance, only found in a few singers. Passage work, as such, Meyerbeer has written only exceptionally in his greatest operas; and whole pieces in this style only where the number happens to lie out of the course of the action, as, for example, the florid arias of Isabella in *Robert*, the aria of the Queen in the second act of the *Huguenots*, both of which may be regarded as it were as concert intermezzi. Meyerbeer had broken with the traditions of the Italian school, and created a new style for himself as German-French-Italian master.

The influence of his operas on the art of singing soon made itself felt. The singers, compelled to accommodate their voices and their manner of singing to the requirements of a new school, forgot the earlier method which had been respected as a model. The injurious consequences to the art of singing have come clearly enough to light: a pressing of all means into requisition; an unrelaxing and exhausting strain upon the highest energies; a vehemence of passion overstepping all æsthetic laws. Meyerbeer has on his conscience all this screaming and unlovely exaggeration of the effects of song; all this feverish excitement of the nerves in over-refined declamation; this abandonment of all naturalness and (even in the height of passion) artistic moderation of song. To the consequences of his direction must it be ascribed, that our singers no longer sing, but scream; that so many singers of the present time fall victims to this manner,—school it cannot be called, but rather a distorted image of the most beautiful in Art, for which Nature has given us such wonderful means.

"It gropes about my ears indeed,  
But to the heart it goeth not!"

As in the opera Rossini was crowded out by Meyerbeer, so likewise in the field of singing a new man arose, who, like Meyerbeer, in spite of great personal attributes, worked destructively for the future, and whose influence upon the

later manner of singing is seldom truly recognized. I mean the singer Duprez.

Hissed off at first in Paris, he turned to Italy, where he staid several years, and then returned to the French capital. Gifted with a splendid tenor voice, he had become developed into a dramatic singer such as had not been known before. His recitatives, delivered with the fullest outlay of energetic declamation, found the liveliest echo in the French. When he came to use his magnificent vocal resources as he did in the Allegro of the Aria in the fourth act of *Tell*, the famous "*Suivez moi*" (commonly omitted on the German stage), where he brought out the high C in the chest voice with all the might of his colossal organ, it was all over with the fame of all his predecessors. Nourrit, till then the favorite of the Parisians, a distinguished tenor singer, recognized the rival's power. His day was over, and in despair over his lost and irrecoverable glory, he flung himself from an upper window down upon the pavement, and so made an end to his life.

Duprez may justly be considered one of the greatest dramatic singers of our time. His manner of singing was identical with the Meyerbeer style of grand opera, and the main features of his method soon spread themselves all over Europe. It possessed brilliant qualities enough to throw the old way of singing into the shade; but it did not last long, as singers soon became aware of its injurious influence upon the voice. Organs already ruined during the period of study, singers who had sacrificed their voices after two or three years of public singing, became from that time nothing rare. Most destructively, perhaps, have the consequences shown themselves among tenors. After hearing of Duprez, and how the chest register could be cultivated even into the highest regions of the voice, the public were no longer contented with the use of the falsetto. Soon it became one of the impossibilities to be engaged as a "heroic tenor," without at least possessing the high B flat in the chest tone. The singers found it a more thankful task to humor the taste of the public, than to pay exact regard to the intentions of the composer; for often Meyerbeer himself indicates, by *pp*, his design that the falsetto and not the chest tone should be employed. That every tenor singer, whether such high pressure suited his natural compass or not, strove to screw his voice up and make effect, was very natural; for Art goes after bread, and a high C with the chest voice ("*Do di petto*") often realizes an income of thousands to its fortunate possessor. Roger has made a laudable exception; his beautiful use of the falsetto certainly produces a more agreeable effect than the forced high chest tones so unnatural to the organ of many a singer. How wide-spread is this mistaken notion, that the use of the falsetto is entirely contrary to Art, we hear frequently enough in the expressions of individuals when some unlucky tenorist happens to get caught on one of these tabooed falsetto tones. Thus the school founded by Duprez, important

in itself, has called into life a manner of singing the ruinous consequences of which we can see daily even now.

[Conclusion next time.]

## A History of Opera.

BY C. SCHULZE.

[Continued from page 10.]

The Italians learned a great deal from their countryman Lully. Rossi and Corelli took the improvements in French opera to Italy, namely a more correct distribution of the separate divisions, as well as the limitation of vocal extravagancies. Most overtures were henceforward treated on the French model. The cumbersome Netherlandish style was gradually quite supplanted by that of Cassati and Melani in Rome; of Colonna in Bologna; of Bassani in Ferrara; of Stradella in Genoa; and of Legrenzi in Venice; of Leo, and, after him, Greco, Caldara, and Buononcini, in Naples. We must likewise mention Vinci, the model of our own Graun and Hasse, the perfecter of the *obligato* recitative, i.e., the recitative vigorously supported by the orchestra; Pertti of Bologna; Porpora of Naples (died in 1767), for his expressive and genuinely artistic employment of the instruments; Rinaldo of Capua; and Pergolesi, whose skilful application of counterpoint, animation and fervor in duets, and sweet melody, excited universal envy among his fellows in art.

Instrumental music, also, had advanced some steps, a fact especially due to the schools of Corelli and Tartini. The first of these schools was distinguished by the simplicity and beauty of harmony and modulation, by contrast and art in imitation; the latter for practical experience in the construction and powers of the violin, for coyness, grace, and unity in the musical ideas. The art of accompaniment entered—thanks, also, to these schools—on a new stage of its career. The similar instruments in the orchestra had their especial places assigned to them; their playing was brought back to a more correct dynamic standard; the employment of them was regulated by greater attention to the purport of the text; and the direction of the orchestra was marked by greater precision. Hasse's instrumentation then held a high place in art.

With all these things, increasing virtuosity among the singers of both sexes went, of course, hand in hand. Singing schools were established in all the large towns of Italy, the most flourishing being, about 1690, those at Naples and Bologna; and Ferri of Perugia, one of the most famous teachers. Rousseau says, in his *Dictionnaire de Musique*, of this singer: he could run up and down, in one breath, two full octaves filled with shakes, and give correctly every chromatic note without an accompaniment. When he left the theatre, his carriage was strewed with roses; and when he entered a town, the people went to meet him, as though he had been a prince. A similar musical meteor was Carlo Broschi—surnamed Farinelli—of Naples, a pupil of Scarlatti, Porpora, and Bernacchi. He could execute in one breath passages lasting fifty seconds, and his voice was so strong that it completely smothered the sound of a trumpet. Of female singers, I will mention only Vittoria Tesi and Faustina Bordoni, subsequently the wife of the great Hasse.

Rameau was the first to improve upon the style of Lully, by combining the separate efforts and ameliorations of his predecessors. At the age of fifty he wrote, in 1734, his first opera, *Hippolite et Aricie*, which proved an unusual success. By this opera, and his other twenty operas, he swayed for thirty years the French stage, for which he

became a second Lully. As regards form, he returned to primitive Italian opera; the air, for instance, reappears as rondo; but, on the other hand, he especially raised the capability of expression by a more richly fashioned system of harmony and declamation.

His instrumentation is more polyphonic, especially in the choruses, and likewise more delicate, than Lully's. Although Hiller cannot see much that is good in Rameau's music; although Marpurg thinks it deficient in natural melody; and although Mattheson would send it to the Iroquois Indians, Rameau must be designated the first who strove to combine the melodious Italian with the declamatory French style. His endeavors divided Paris, from 1752 to 1754, into two hostile camps, that of the Buffonists, who exalted comic Italian opera above everything else, and the Anti-Buffonists, who preferred national French opera. The latter at last triumphed, and the Italians had to leave Paris. In consequence of this, *opera comique* was subsequently developed, side by side with grand opera, into a national production. In connection with this fact Grétry, a Fleming (1741—1813), the composer of about forty operas, must be especially mentioned. His *Richard Cœur de Lion* has been favorably received even very recently. As imitators of Grétry, I may name d'Alayrac (died in 1809); Catel (died in 1830); Berton (died in 1844); but more especially Isouard (died in 1818), the rival of Boieldieu, the composer of *Cendrillon*, an opera which was performed for more than one hundred successive nights in Paris, and made the round of Europe; and *Jocande*, a work long popular in France and Germany.

But this combination, which Rameau endeavored to effect, of Italian and French opera is to be found in some German composers, who naturally exercised a material influence upon the foundation of a German opera. Among them was Steffani in Hanover (died in 1788); Küsser in Hamburg (died in 1727); and more especially Reinhard Keiser, also in Hamburg (died in 1739), the first great German operatic composer; furthermore, Handel (died in 1759); Mattheson (died in 1764); and Telemann (died in 1767), who all wrote for the Hamburg stage. Of these composers, Keiser, who possessed a fertile fancy, is favorably distinguished for pleasing and graceful melody and oratorically-musical accentuation. He was a genuine German composer, for, of his 116 operas, which for forty years, from 1694 to 1734, were the favorites of the Hamburg stage, not one was written to an Italian book, though German poetry was not then in a condition to provide a musician with particularly agreeable materials to work upon. The other Hamburg composers generally selected Italian books, or German adaptations of them. Even Handel could not permanently hold the public captive; he was deficient (?) in the idealistic element. His operas are a chain of airs connected by a thread of recitative, sparingly interrupted by choruses and still duets, without any truth in the personages or the situations, and without any logical consistency in the plots.

The Italian style was equally, or even more, cultivated by Hasse, in Dresden, who wrote fifty-two operas, and Graun, in Berlin, who wrote more than thirty, among which the first, *Rodelinde*, was composed, in 1742, for the Carnival in the latter capital.

Hasse's strength lay in the Susceptible and Emotional. He attached the highest value to *bravura*. But Graun's music excels Hasse's. It is far more dramatic, and his airs are, both melodically and harmonically, far more important.

Keiser made upon the Hamburg stage the laudable attempt to render comic opera something national. His efforts proved, however, a failure soon after the year 1740. The same fact must be recorded of the German opera opened at Mannheim in 1777, and of that started by Joseph II. at Vienna, in 1778; the latter collapsed as early as 1783. But thoroughly to transform the Italian style and guide it into a genuinely artistic path, was a task which only one man then understood, that man being Gluck, born 1714, died 1787. With him there began a new and

bright feature in the musical drama—the earnest, ideal conception of it. Gluck's profound feeling and perseverance produced works which surpassed aught previously known.

In Vienna, where, since the commencement of the 17th century, Italian opera had grown into great favor, Gluck had enjoyed the opportunity of seeing many a sterling master's work admirably performed. Fux, Porfili, Caldara, Buononcini, and others, were engaged there. The celebrated Sammartini became his master in Milan. After staying in that city for four years, Gluck wrote, in 1741, his first opera, *Artaserse*, which soon spread his name about. During the five years following, he wrote operas for Milan, Venice, and Cremona; produced, 1746, in London, *La Caduta de Giganti*, and then settled permanently in Vienna. He there composed industriously, but always after the Italian model. It was with *Alceste*, the book of which was supplied by Calsabigi, that, at the age of fifty-three, and after having already composed twenty operas, Gluck deliberately left the broad Italian highway, and entered upon a new path. Being more inclined to national French opera, he abandoned the Italian language, and had Racine's *Iphigenie in Aulide* arranged for him. It was produced, under the patronage of Marie Antoinette, at Paris, in 1774, and awoke, nay, worked up into fury, the slumbering party feud of the Buffonists and Anti-Buffonists.

On the 2nd August, in the same year, his transition opera, *Orpheus*, remodelled, was produced. Soon after this, he set out for Vienna. The Italian party profited by his absence to send to Naples for the celebrated Piccini, who certainly was very strong in comic opera, and a respectable composer generally, who was not equal to Gluck. The performances of *Iphigenie en Tauride*, in 1779 and 1781, were crowned with the most brilliant success, and considerably thinned the ranks of the hostile party.

Gluck at last remained the victor. The success achieved by *Echo and Narcissus* was not so great. Now, in what did the reforms consist which have caused Gluck to be reckoned among the greatest artists of our nation?

An opera is for Gluck a musical work of art, one and indivisible. The operatic stage is not a concert-room, and still less an arena for musical rope-dancers. The previous traditional musical forms were destined to undergo manifold alterations. The overture to *Alceste* already shows the thinking artist; instead of so much pretty toying on a fixed model, it contains significant thoughts in logical connection. Gluck's chorus is rather a genuine choral song. His air is closer and more rounded off than that of other composers. The declamation and the internal truth of the verbal expression are perfect. The harmonies are rich and dignified; the instrumentation is delicate and full of color. The music is subordinated to the text and the psychological truth of the action, and does not interrupt the song of the latter by a system of ornamentation. Gluck was and still is our master in heroic opera. Every person whose taste has not been ruined by modern musical caricatures, and Italian dalliance, still delights in Gluck. What two hundred years previously was attempted by the Florentine musical club of Bardi and Corsi, namely, to combine the spirit of antique tragedy with modern sentiment, that did the German master Gluck happily effect.\* He was the creator of what is termed classical opera.

For the satisfaction of those gentlemen who, to show they know nothing of German, will constantly substitute "u" for "u" in the composer's name, we beg to show them, by citing the original of the above passage, in which Herr Schulze indulges in a sort of pun not to be rendered into English, where their pet diacritics are correct: "das hat der deutsche Meister Gluck mit Gluck zu Stande gebracht."

[To be Continued.]

#### Music in our Public Schools.

A Paper Read at the Meeting of the American Social Science Association, April 3, 1871, by Dr. J. Baxter Upham.

(Concluded from page 19.)

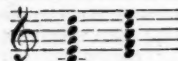
In the lowest class in the grammar schools the pupil is rapidly led over the whole ground taken in his primary course, now and hence forward by reference to the musical characters; rote-teaching and rote-singing being for the most part aban-

doned. The child is now expected to begin to read the notation of simple musical phrases at sight. I cannot better explain the progress and method of instruction in the lower grades of the grammar classes than by quoting the words of Mr. Holt, in his recent report of his doings, to Mr. Eichberg, and which appears as an appendix to the Semi-Annual Report of the Standing Committee on Music, under date of 20th December last. He speaks as follows:

"In my sixth class is commenced an intellectual study of the sounds of the scale.

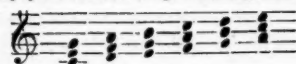
"To illustrate: Children are taught to recognize any sound of the scale, by its scale name; as 1, 2, 3, 1, 4, 2, 5, 6, 5, 7, 8, &c.; and they will produce the same at the dictation of the teacher. This is to educate the ear.

"One or two minutes are spent in this exercise, which are followed by a representation of the sounds, thus:

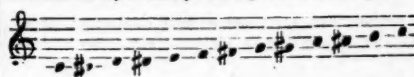


which trains the eye together with the ear.

"Five minutes are spent in this way, each day, as a drill exercise, followed by practice upon the music charts. The result of this drill is remarkable. The ear becomes so well trained that children will go to the black-board and write the scale, or pitch-name, of any sounds given with the syllable *la*. This drill of single sounds is followed by Triad practice, after which the class is divided, an additional pointer used, and the pupil is trained in two-part harmony, thus:



"This is followed by the practice of two part songs upon the charts, together with the beating of the time; and, in addition to this, in the fifth and fourth classes, by the chromatic scale and a study of the keys which grow out of it, e. g.:



"And such has been the progress that children ten years of age will go to the black board and write the pitch of any progression of sounds which may be given in any of the sharp keys.

"I think it is safe to say that at the end of the school year the fourth class will have so practical a knowledge of all the nine different keys that they will sing correctly any choral, which may be written in any of those keys, at sight.

"The pupils become familiar with the position of each scale upon the staff, the same as in the key of C. To illustrate:



In the third or next higher class is introduced the study of the intervals, the chords and the triads.

At the end of this year the pupils can readily sing in plain three-part harmonies, and should understand all the signs and characters used in musical composition, and be able to comprehend and read at sight any of the music found in our ordinary collections of psalmody. This, as I said at the outset, is as far as I think it expedient, for the present, to carry these illustrations, since it covers the most important part of the ground to be occupied in the general introduction of a system of musical teaching in the common schools of the land. Thus much, then, for musical instruction as it is given in the Boston public schools. The question now returns: Can such instruction be made available, at a moderate expense, in our public schools generally throughout the country? And if so, how? and at what cost?

An essential element in the plan of such teaching, as we have seen, is this: that it be given mainly by the regular school teachers, with the aid and general direction only of a professional teacher. We have seen that a single professional teacher can superintend the instruction of a large number of pupils,—just how many will depend upon circumstances. The number may be more or less, according to the density of the population, and to the general ability of the corps of regular teachers employed. In a city like this, where, we may perhaps say without boasting, that the standard of qualification is high, from 160 to 240 schools or classes, representing 8000 to 12,000 pupils, can thus be taught.



In the neighboring cities of Salem and Lowell, and some others in this State, a single intelligent head has been found sufficient. The salaries might vary from \$1000 or \$1200 to \$3000 per annum. My belief is that in towns and cities not exceeding a population of 40,000 to 60,000 inhabitants, or in rural districts where a group of smaller towns and villages or perhaps half this population in the aggregate exists, and which could all be conveniently visited in a circuit of a week or ten days' extent, a single professional teacher only would be required. And in the latter instance a competent man, who should be a resident of the district, ought to be had for \$1200 per annum.

I take it for granted that all the regular teachers could do their part in such instruction if they would. It requires in the system we have been considering no special musical ability or previous training. An aptness to teach only is necessary, and any person who is fitted in other respects to hold the responsible position as a teacher in a public school has the ability, I contend, to learn in a very short time (under the direction of a competent professional head, such as we have named) how to teach the elements of music as well as the other studies required in our common schools. Nor is it necessary that the teacher should be able to sing in order to be successful in this branch of study, though of course it is an aid. On this point says Mr. Holt in his report to the Music Committee in 1869, "In the short time within which music has been regularly and systematically taught in the classes under my charge, only seven out of the two hundred and fifty-one teachers who have come under my observation have proved themselves unable to do their work satisfactorily. Of these seven, three exchange work with other teachers at the time of the music lesson, one employs a teacher from outside to aid her in this part of her work, who is present at the time of my visit to receive my instructions, while in three rooms the work is imperfectly done. With regard to the progress made in different classes," continues Mr. Holt, "it varies in proportion to the faithfulness of the teacher. I find that teachers who are regarded as superior in other branches, obtain the best results in music. And many of my best teachers are among those who had no idea that they could do anything in music when we commenced. . . . I visit each of the two hundred and fifty-one teachers with their classes once in every four weeks; in this way I am able to help every teacher over any difficulty she may encounter, and to shape my instructions to the wants of each class."

Says Mr. Phinbrick in his report, to which I have already alluded, "The improvement in the method of teaching music has very naturally helped the improvement of the methods of handling the other branches. As a general rule, teachers in an elementary school who teach one branch well, teach all branches well."

The cost of musical teaching to any city or town, or to a group of towns situated as I have said, having an aggregate population of say 20,000 inhabitants (one-fifth of whom may be reckoned to be of the school age), ought not to exceed the sum of \$1350 per annum, and would be made up as follows:

The salary of the professional teacher, say, . . . . . \$1,200 00  
A Set of Charts, with Stand complete, for each school (say for 80 schools, with an average of 50 pupils each, \$11 25 x 80 = \$900); which should last with careful treatment, six years (\$900 ÷ 6) . . . . . 150 00

Making, as above, . . . . . \$1,350 00

The manual for the teacher, as also the pitch-pipe, is not included in the above expense, it being supposed that each teacher would desire to purchase and possess them. And with this manual in the hands of the teacher, the charts and the blackboard, I believe that up to the age I have indicated text books in music may be dispensed with altogether.

If to this be added the cost of a pitch pipe and a copy of the "Tracher's Manual" (explaining the use of the charts) for each school, the cost (on the supposition that these, like the charts, would last by careful usage six years) would be increased by \$26.67—making a total of \$1376.67, or a trifle over 34 cents for each scholar per annum.

With such simple addition to the mechanism of our common school system of education, and at so slight expense, an elementary knowledge of music could be diffused throughout the country. What variety and interest it would give to the dull routine of every day school work! What sunshine and gladness it would infuse into the homes and hearts of the people!

## Obituary.

DANIEL FRANCOIS ESPRIT AUBER.

Auber, one of the most distinguished musical composers that France has produced, died in Paris yesterday, at the advanced age of 87 years. He was born at Caen, Jan. 29, 1784, and when a boy evinced a passionate taste for music. At the age of 20 he was sent to London to study business, but, finding it utterly distasteful, returned to Paris and devoted himself more than ever to his favorite art. He composed some pieces which were received with applause in private circles, but, feeling convinced of the importance of assiduous study, he placed himself under the tuition of Cherubini, and in 1813 appeared before the

public in an opera entitled, *Sejour Militaire*, which was not a success. He was discouraged, and for some years did not contribute to the theatres, but, fortunately for the world and his own fame, the death of his father in embarrassed circumstances compelled him to devote himself to his art as a means of support, and in 1819 he produced at the Opera Comique *Le Testament et les Billets-doux*, an opera in one act. This was also unfavorably received, but undeterred by the ungenerous comments of critics, he wrote *La Bergère Chetelaine*, which was produced in the same theatre in the early part of the year 1820, and entirely reversed the public verdict regarding his merits. The history of the succeeding half century of his life presents a succession of triumphs. All his grace, spirit, and dramatic power appeared in the opera just named, which, with *Emma, ou la Promesse imprudente*, produced the following year, founded the brilliant reputation he enjoyed. From that time forward he produced a great number of works, some of which are the most successful operas now represented upon the stage. An imitator of Rossini at the outset, he gradually acquired greater independence of style, and in *Masaniello*, in which his genius reached its culminating point, he ventured to form a style of his own, to which he afterwards steadily adhered. In addition to the works mentioned, *Le Cheval de Bronze*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Le Domino Noir*, *Les Diamants de la Couronne*, *L'Elisir d'Amour*, *Le Dieu et la Bayadere*, *Gustave*, *La Sirène*, and *Haydée*, are among his most popular operas, and will immortalize his genius. Many of them have been translated into English and German, and almost all into Italian, and their melodies are known all over the civilized world. He continued until a few years ago a vigorous and successful writer for the stage.

The characteristics of Auber's music are sprightliness, grace, and great clearness and simplicity in their dramatic effects. His combinations are ingenious, if not profound, and his melodies simple, and often tender, although rarely pathetic. He succeeded best in buffo operas, for which Scribe furnished him with admirable librettos, and which are models of light and graceful composition. Among his last compositions, exclusive of those for the stage, was a March for the opening of the London Exposition of 1862. He received many marks of regal and imperial favor in France.—*N. Y. Tribune*, 15th.

SIGISMUND THALBERG.

[From the Weekly Review, New York.]

The announcement of the death of this great pianist, recalls in a time which was a golden one for all virtuosos. Europe was lying prostrate at the feet of those who could amuse the people. The governments fostered this sentiment. In France the *bourgeoisie* reigned supreme, and every means was employed to delight this important and influential class of society. Theatres, concerts and balls were the centre of attraction. A singer, a player, a dancer of unusual merit, became a great historical moment. Germany echoed this sentiment. There society took its life from Paris. People danced to the fife played in the French capital. A new opera, a new overture, a new prima donna, created the only possible sensation. Heroes were only those who could play the piano and the violin. It was the time when Ernst, with his "Elegy," was able to make people weep. Performers with long hair and pale faces were the accepted benefactors of society. It was at this time that Thalberg won his laurels. His pianism was the wonder of the day. When he came forward with his fantasia on "Moise," the public imagined there were two persons who played the pianoforte. Even pianists thought so, when he first played in a back room of a well known manufacturer in Paris; the critics talked of an innovation. Yet the thing was old, the germ of the system could be found in Beethoven's Sonatas. The clever pianist simply enlarged the principle laid down by the great master. He made the whole keyboard speak in his own methodical and scholarly manner. The effect at least at that time was unprecedented, especially when the author himself was the interpreter. And indeed nobody else could play like him.

He had the most beautiful touch together with the most marvellous technique. When he came to us in New York years ago, his powers were considerably worn. But at the time of his glory thirty years ago his playing was perfection. Alas, this very quality made it dry and monotonous. It was impossible to listen to him for any length of time. He lacked imagination and inspiration. His operas, his sonatas, prove this sufficiently. He was at the piano, what he was in life, a perfect gentleman. Emotional powers he had none. There was no change in his appearance from the time he sat down at the piano to the time he left it. He never became excited, even in the hottest days he could not even perspire. To

him the well known words of the old Austrian Emperor, addressed to Dreyshock, could not be applied: "Sir, I have heard a good many of your profession, but I never saw anybody perspire like you." His influence is gone, and we think there are but very few pianists who perform his fantasias in public. Yet his "L'Art du chant" may even now be used by teachers with good advantage. In conclusion let us say with the lady in Paris, who, when asked about the merits of the two pianists, who occupied the attention of the musical world at that time, exclaimed: "Thalberg is the greatest pianist, but Liszt is the only one."

## Miss Vienna Demorest's Concert.

[From the New York Sun, April 14.]

Miss Vienna Demorest gave her first public concert at Steinway Hall on Wednesday evening. There has never within our remembrance been a singer who commenced her career under such a weight of praise. The press has teemed with the most extravagant compliments of her voice and her singing, and recently, in a magazine printed in this city, her portrait was published on the opposite page and face to face with that of Nilsson. The suggestion was that these were sisters in art; and, in fact, several papers have not hesitated in plain words to award the young singer an equal place with that held by the distinguished Swede.

Amid this general course of laudation, Miss Demorest will not perhaps take it amiss if she hears one voice of quiet and truthful dissent, especially if that dissent is spoken only in a spirit of kindness. It may even serve as a foil and to give greater zest to the overwhelming flattery that has preceded her public appearance, just as the King of Macedon in the midst of his obsequious courtiers took a curious delight in the grim official whose sole duty it was to repeat from hour to hour the caution: "Philip, thou art but mortal!"

We freely say therefore that few vocalists that have ever appeared on the stage of Steinway Hall have had so many conspicuous faults and so little actual attainment in their art as Miss Demorest.

The young lady is entirely unprepared for a public appearance. The programme of the evening announced that she was about to go to Europe to study, and this is well; but it seems a little singular that the concert that should have come at the conclusion and as the culminating point of this study should have been allowed to precede it. To begin with a public concert and then to commence to learn to sing is rather reversing the natural order of events. It may however serve to mark the progress that Miss Demorest will undoubtedly make; and after the discipline that she will be subjected to by any first rate teacher, she will herself be the first to acknowledge that she stood but at the very beginning of her art on the occasion of giving this concert, and perhaps to wonder at her own temerity.

As words of general criticism are but of little use, we shall briefly refer in detail to some of Miss Demorest's characteristics as a singer.

In the first place, her tone is exceedingly bad. It is neither pure nor sweet, but on the contrary thin, reedy, and unpleasant. And this arises apparently not from any organic defect, but from an absolute lack of knowledge of how to produce the tone, which is indeed the basis of the art of singing. The young lady is without training—the merest novice in an art, the elements of which she has yet to master.

Among the pieces that she sang was Donizetti's very charming, brilliant, and familiar aria, "O Luce di quest' Anima." It is a difficult aria, and served as well as any that could have been selected to exhibit all the defects of Miss Demorest's voice and execution. The tone, in the first place, owing to the wrong position of the vocal cords and muscles, was, as we have said, bad and thin. The vocalization was slipshod, the notes in rapid descending passages being slurred over and not distinctly given. The intonation was faulty—in other words, she failed to sing the notes in perfect tune; the pronunciation of the vowel tones in this, but more especially in her English songs, was conspicuously bad; and the general effect was that of an untaught beginner undertaking, with more ambition than judgment, what only an artist could perform.

If Miss Demorest goes to such a teacher as Wartel of Paris, or to any man of repute, he will at once tell her all this and a hundred other wholesome truths, and will dispel the illusions that injudicious flattery has thrown about her. Probably she will be kept steadily at singing simple scales, and more especially at singing single notes, for months, until she has learned to produce an even tone. Nor in all likelihood will she be permitted so much as to sing a ballad for a year or two. It takes five years of un-

remitting training to make a vocalist, and we sincerely hope that, at the end of that time, Miss Demorest may be able to make good the half of what her unwise and injudicious friends have said of her. If there is any one stumbling-block in the way of true success, it is the falsehood of undiscerning and insincere flattery. When Miss Demorest first discovers and recognizes the fact that she has no method—which is the touchstone of all vocalism—then she will be prepared to take the first earnest step forward in her art, and not till then. The A B C of music must first be acquired, and upon this alphabet she may afterward build.

We cannot refrain from referring to the unknown accompanist, whose name was wisely omitted from the programme, and who might have spoiled a better concert. He accompanied Mr. Thomas in his singing of Schubert's "Wanderer," and so discreditable a player we have never heard in public. Whole handfuls of chords were played falsely, the minor ones often being played major and the major ones converted into minor. He began with the wrong chord, and continued a series of blunders to the very end. So wildly discordant did he become at times, that it seemed as though he would inevitably lead Mr. Thomas off into some other key; and it was only the fact that that gentleman is a correct and excellent musician that saved him from completely breaking down.

### To Be, or not to Be.

One of a thousand would be "native composers" bespeaks our sympathy in the following touching appeal through the columns of the New Bedford Mercury:

Messrs. Editors:—It is, I believe, a privilege of the aggrieved of every class to confide their sorrows to the public, and through the medium of the press to seek sympathy and counsel. I am a musical man, in my way. Nature has favored me with a larynx which enables me to sing from C below the staff to the fifth ledger line; and an average of fifteen minutes a day devoted to the practice of the piano, from early childhood, has given me a command of the instrument, and has frequently won applause in the round dancers, as well as in the more lively cotillon. But I am also a composer. At distant intervals I have given to the world, at one time a waltz, which tripping belles have called "sweet," and at another, a ballad which has drawn tears from the eyes of my auditors, perhaps for various reasons. Shakespeare makes Isabella say:

"The poor beetle that we tread upon  
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great  
As when a giant dies."

And if, comparing small with great, their woes be equal, may not their joys also have the same exaltation? I am sure Beethoven or Mozart never listened to their own divine conceptions with more thrilling pleasure than I have heard mine, rendered by some fair friend, lending the grace of her own accomplishments to the genius she inspired. But Mozart, Beethoven and I have had our mortifications, and this brings me to the point.

The other night I called upon the Miss Simpkinses, or the Misses Simpkins (which is right?) carrying, with the music selected for the evening's amusement, one or two of my own compositions, which I modestly hoped would receive the applause of these cultured amateurs, since I regarded them as among my best efforts. The first "opus" which I hesitatingly essayed was a descriptive ballad, in which a homeward bound vessel goes to pieces in the dark, and something white on the shore, which proves to be one of the drowned, is buried the next morning in a quiet church yard conveniently near. I never sang so impressively. But the younger Miss Simpkins remarked, as I concluded, that she always preferred to hear the other words, "The breaking waves dashed high," to that song. Well, I suppose it is true that musical, as well as other great thoughts often run in the same channels. And so, though somewhat discomfited, I sang my second effort, a sacred melody, which the elder Miss Simpkins warmly praised as an old hymn that always was a favorite. Messrs. Editors, would you advise me to continue composition under these circumstances, or shall I leave the field to others? Please reply through the columns of the New York Ledger. A.

## Music Abroad.

### London.

ORATORIO CONCERTS. The fifth concert of the season took place in St. James's Hall on Wednesday evening week, when *Israel in Egypt* was, if we are not mistaken, given for the first time under Mr. Barnby's direction. The wisdom of choosing a work that demands greater resources than were available is open to serious question. Handel's stupendous choruses want power in the first instance, and the public

have been accustomed to hear them at Exeter Hall and the Crystal Palace Festivals under conditions adapted to satisfy this requirement. Hence it was anticipated that Mr. Barnby's modest "350" could produce little effect, and that the performance would pass off, as far as concerned its choral music, without making the customary sensation. Such, in point of fact, was the case, the famous "Hailstone" alone eliciting more than slight applause. The solos were taken by Mme. Sherrington, Miss Sinclair, Mme. Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Raynham, Herr Stepan, and Mr. Beale. Mme. Patey won much favor for her admirable rendering of "Thou shalt bring them in;" and Mr. Reeves achieved one of his greatest triumphs in "The enemy said," and the recitatives preceding the final chorus. He sang the former with astonishing vigor and power of voice, while his declamation of the latter was one of the finest artistic achievements in our remembrance. About the superlative excellence of each effort there could be no doubt at all, and the audience were not slack in showing their appreciation. Mr. Reeves very properly declined to repeat the air, and, but for their natural excitement, we should blame the audience for making so unreasonable a request. Herr Stepan and Mr. Beale—a veteran and a recruit—were associated in "The Lord is a man of war," but not happily, inasmuch as the veteran has spent a good deal of his strength, and the recruit was nervous. The orchestra did good service, and Mr. Docker made the most of an organ which goes for little at best.—*Mus. World.*

MODERN CHAMBER MUSIC.—The last of a series of concerts introducing new and little-known chamber compositions by living masters, took place at the Hanover Square Rooms on Friday week. The programmes of the three concerts comprised two quartets, Op. 25 and 26, and a quintet, Op. 34, for piano and strings, by Johannes Brahms; a pianoforte trio and string quartet by Robert Volkmann; a sonata for piano and viola, and a quartet, by Antoine Rubinstein; a trio for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, in D, by Carl Reinecke. To the chamber compositions of Brahms we have repeatedly called attention, and are glad to note the favor they met with. Robert Volkmann shows distinct traces of Schumann's influence, but his work, less intellectual than that of Brahms, is more impregnated with the spirit of national songs and dances, particularly of Hungary. Brahms and Volkmann show themselves capable of keen self-criticism. This cannot be said of Rubinstein. We know of no important piece of his which would not gain by a use of the pruning knife. His principal thoughts, always vigorous, are not unfrequently marred by want of refinement in their development and diction. At the last concert Herr Reinecke took the pianoforte part of his trio in D, a brilliant and effectively-written composition, which was well received. A set of solo pianoforte variations on a *passépie* of Bach's, which Herr Reinecke played later in the evening, fell flat, though the very cleverly contrived piece deserves the praise of musicians, perhaps even more than the trio. The pianoforte was played, and extremely well played, at the first two concerts by Herr Willem Coenen, the violin by Mr. Wiener, viola by Mr. Zgrbin, and violoncello by Herr Daubert—all excellent artists. The performances were carefully rehearsed. Concerts of a similar tendency ought to be less exceptional.—*Ibid.*

MENDELSSOHN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION.—At a meeting of the committee on the 22nd of April, for the election of a scholar (Cipriani Potter, Esq., in the chair), William Shakespeare, (!) student of the Royal Academy of Music, was unanimously elected to the vacant scholarship. The examiners were the Chairman (Mr. Cipriani Potter), Sir Julius Benedict, Mr. John Goss, Mr. C. Hallé, Mr. Hullah, Mr. Arthur Sullivan, and the Hon. Secretary (Mr. Otto Goldschmidt.)

BERLIN.—(Correspondence of the *London Musical World*). Herr Bernhard Hopfer's opera, *Frithjof* is in active rehearsal at the Operahouse, which, by the way, is epithetized as "Royal," despite the elevation of the King to the Imperial dignity. The following retrospective glance of what was done at this theatre from the 1st October to the 31st December, 1870, is taken from the *Staats Anzeiger*. Besides Richard Wagner's grand operas, *Die Meistersinger*, *Lohengrin*, *Rienzi* and *Tannhäuser*, and Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, the management gave the classical operas of Beethoven and Gluck, new life being imparted to the latter's *Armide* and *Iphigenie in Aulis*. Then came Mozart's *Don Juan*, *Zauberflöte*, and *Figaro's Hochzeit*, the last being selected for the benefit of Herr Krause, on his ceasing to be a member of the company. While grand French opera was represented by Auber's *Muette*, and Italian opera by Verdi's *Troatore*, the romantic school was not forgotten, both

*Margarethe* and *Romeo und Julie*, by M. Gounod, having been performed. These operas, in the more elevated style, were varied by light operas with dialogue (*Spielepern*), such as Donizetti's *Elixir d'Amore*; Auber's *Diamants de la Couronne*, *Maçon*, and *Fra Diavolo*; Rossini's *Barbiere*; Lortzing's *Czar und Zimmermann*; a revival in this branch of opera was *Die beiden Schützen*, by the last-named composer, a piece which by its subject, and the complets distributed through it here and there, is very appropriate at this particular moment. Of Weber, there was only one work given, but that was his best, namely, *Der Freyschütz*; of Bellini we had *Norma*, and of Verdi *La Traviata*, each repeated once; lastly, there was one performance of Herr von Flotow's *Martha*. In addition to the ballet of *Flick und Flock*, embellished with new pictures adapted to the times; *Fantasia*; and smaller choreographic works, the management included in its programme some grand dramas, of which we may mention *Struensee* by Michael Beer; *Faust*, by Goethe; Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*; and Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with Mendelssohn's music.

Two patriotic concerts given on the 29th October and 16th November by the Royal Chapel, with the co-operation of large choruses, under the direction of Herren Eckert and Taubert, occupy an honorable place among the various musical performances got up for charitable purposes during the war. The first especially brought in a large sum, and, moreover, by the performance of the Ninth Symphony, and of Schiller's ode, "An die Freude," served to remind the audience of the hundredth anniversary of Beethoven's birthday, which was universally kept on the 17th December. This event was duly observed on two successive days, both at the Theatre Royal, and at the Operahouse; at the former by Goethe's *Egmont*, with Beethoven's music, and at the latter by *Fidelio*, Beethoven's only creation in this branch of the art. Of the numerous performances—the sum total was seventy-four—there were four of a new opera by Herr Bernhard Scholz. It bears the title of *Ziethen'sche Husaren*. After being given in Breslau, Hamburg, and Leipzig, it was first produced at the Royal Opera house on the 4th October, and within a short period repeated three times. The story, which has been put into its present shape by Herr Th. Rehbaum, belongs to the time of Friedrich II. It is founded on an anecdote replete with patriotic feeling, and, from its martial character, has much that fits it for the present time.

Herr Richard Wagner and his wife will take this capital on their way home from Leipzig at the end of the month. Herr Wagner has asked the Academy, of which he is a member, for permission to give a lecture "On the Purpose of Opera." Of course, the lecture will be published in the shape of a book. The publication of the "Kaisermarsch" was announced for the 14th inst. The pianoforte arrangement for two hands is by Herr Tausig; that for four hands, by Herr Ulrich; and that for eight hands by Herr Horn. The arrangement for military bands is by Herr Wiprecht. The march will be first publicly performed here under the Direction of Herr Bilse.

VIENNA.—In the 365 days of the Subscription Year, from the 1st April, 1870, to the 31st March, 1871, there was only one performance at the old Opera house. This was on Easter Sunday, 17th April, 1870, for a charitable purpose. Robert le Diable was announced, but, in consequence of the indisposition of Herr Müller, it had to be withdrawn, and *Guillaume Tell* substituted. All the other performances took place in the new Operahouse. For 47 days in the months of July and August, 1870, the house was closed for the holidays; on five days there was no performance in consequence of rehearsals or preparations for novelties; on eleven days, there was no performance in consequence of those days being grand festivals of the Church; on three days the house was closed because the Court was in mourning; on two days there were performances for charitable purposes; on three days, the theatre was devoted to gala-performances; on four days, there were performances in aid of the Pension Fund, and, on another day, there was a concert for the same purpose; on 266 days, the performances were in the Subscription, 350 being guaranteed, and sixteen extra, which were given for nothing. The repertory consisted of thirty-one different operas and eight ballets. The following were produced with a fresh mise-en-scène, and for the first time at the new Operahouse: *L'Africaine*, *Gustavus*, *Joseph*, *Mignon*, *Tannhäuser*, *Robert le Diable*, *Lohengrin*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Juive*, *Judith*, *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Rigoletto*, *Le Domino Noir*, *Gisèle*, *Monte Christo*, *Esmeralda*, and *Nana Sahib*. The following were the number of times the various operas were played:—*Faust*, 17 times; *L'Africaine*, 16; *Tannhäuser*, 12; *Der Freyschütz*, 11; *Romeo et Julie*,



11; *Don Giovanni*, 10; *La Juive*, 10; *Guillaume Tell*, 10; and *Die Zauberflöte*, 10; *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Les Huguenots*, and *Mignon*, 8 times each; *Lohengrin*, *Norma* and *Le Prophète*, 7 times each; *Martha*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Robert le Diable*, 6 times each; *Fra Diavolo*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Gustavus*, 5 times each; *Le Domino Noir*, *Joseph*, and *La Muette*, 4 times each; *Fidelio* and *Judith*, 3 times each; *Armida*, *Le Postillon de Jonjumeau*, and *Rigoletto*, twice each; and *L'Africaine*, once.

COLOGNE.—The forty-sixth Musical Festival of the Lower Rhine will be specially devoted to the celebration of peace. It will take place here from the 28th to the 30th May, under the supreme direction of Dr. Ferdinand Hiller. Among the artists already engaged are Herr and Mme. Joachim; Herr Stockhausen of Stuttgart; and Herr Schild, of Weimar. The programme will include on the 28th: "Fest-overture," Reinecke; Cantata, "Eine feste Burg," J. S. Bach; Overture to *Iphigenia*, Gluck; "Israel's Siegesang" (a hymn on words from the Bible), Ferdinand Hiller; and the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven. On the 29th, Handel's oratorio of *Josua* will be performed; and, on the 30th, the works selected will be, in addition to the vocal solos, "Coronation Hymn," Handel; Violin Concerto, Joachim; and the overture to *Der Freyschütz*. A petition has been forwarded to the Emperor requesting him to attend the Festival.

NAPLES.—An unknown *Missa Solemnis* by the famous Neapolitan composer, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, has just been discovered among the archives of San Ferdinando at Naples. The parts have been carefully copied from the score at the instigation of Signor Serrao, who intended to have the work performed in Passion-Week for the congregation of the before-named church. Pergolesi, who died at the age of twenty-two, just when he had finished his celebrated *Stabat Mater*, and who, though so young, had already formed a style, is one of the most interesting of the Italian composers belonging to the early period of the eighteenth century. Among his very few compositions for the theatre, the best known is *La Serva Padrona*; the only other one that has been published is *Il Maestro di Musica*.

## Musical Correspondence.

NEW YORK, MAY 8.—The last concert of the Church Music Association came off at Steinway Hall, on Wednesday evening. This was the programme:

Overture "La Muette di Portici".....Auber.  
Mass in D.....Niedermeyer.  
Music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (with choruses)  
Mendelssohn.

The concert was not as great an artistic success as either of the first two. The "Midsummer Night's Dream" did not go as smoothly as was expected. The orchestra played as well as usual, but the chorus showed a want of sufficient rehearsal. The Poem, or such parts of it as had relation to the music, was read by Mr. Matthison. The Mass in D, by Niedermeyer, is a magnificent work, and was finely sung. The solos were undertaken by Mme. Anna Bishop-Schultze (soprano), Miss Clara Perl (contralto), Mr. Wm. S. Leggat (tenor), and Mr. F. Remmert (basso).

During the intermission between the first and second parts, the conductor, Mr. James Pech, was presented by the subscribers with a handsome gold watch and chain.

The opera season at the Academy, under the management of Signor Albites, which commenced on Monday, was very successful, the Academy being crowded at each performance. "Poliuto" was given on Monday, "Traviata" on Wednesday and Saturday mainée, and "Un Ballo in Maschera" on Friday evening. "Rigoletto," "Sicilian Vespers" and "Faust" are announced for this week.

The sixth and last Philharmonic Concert of the season, on Saturday evening, may be considered as the end of the musical season, though there are two weeks more of opera. The following was the programme:

Symphony, No. 3, in A minor.....Mendelssohn.  
Scena ed Aria: "Freyschütz".....Weber.  
Miss Mary Krebs.  
Violin Concerto in D, op. 61.....Beethoven.  
Dr. Leopold Damrosch.  
Overture to "Idomeneo," [first time].....Mozart.  
Song, from Goethe's "Faust".....Duchauer.  
Miss Krebs.  
Overture: "Le Carnaval Romain".....Berlioz.

Mendelssohn's greatest orchestral work was well performed, with the exception that Mr. Bergmann took the time of the Scherzo a little too fast.

It is not often that Beethoven's Violin Concerto is heard entire. The first movement has been played many times, but the other two are very unfamiliar. Dr. Damrosch played his own cadenza. Mr. Vieuxtemps was engaged to play at this concert, and appeared at a private rehearsal, but was unable to appear at the concert.

Miss Krebs has a pleasant mezzo-soprano voice, but not of much power. She was recalled after each of her songs.

The following is a list of the works performed this season (the 29th):

Symphonies. Beethoven, Nos. 4, 7, and 8; Schubert, "Unfinished" in B minor; Rubinstein, "Ocean"; Mozart, No. 5, in D major; Schumann, No. 3, in E flat; Mendelssohn, No. 3, "Scotch."

Overtures. Wagner, "Tannhäuser"; Beethoven, "Egmont" (with all the music, songs, &c.); Cherubini, "Anacreon"; Mendelssohn, "Ruy Blas"; Goldmark, "Sakuntala"; Schumann, "Overture, scherzo, et finale," op. 52; Reinecke, "Aladdin"; Bargiel, "Medea"; Gade, "In the highlands"; Mozart, "Idomeneo"; Berlioz, "Le Carnaval Romain."

Pianoforte Concertos. Beethoven, Nos. 3 (C minor) and 5 (E flat); Liszt, Nos. 1 (E flat) and 2 (A flat); Rubinstein, No. 4 (D minor).

Violin Concerto. Beethoven, in D.

Miscellaneous Pieces. Liszt, Symphonic poem: "Tasso"; Bergmann, Recitative and Romanza (bass clarinet); Lachner, Serenade for four violincellos; Mendelssohn, Scherzo from "Midsummer Night's Dream" (piano).

Songs, Arias, &c. Mozart, from "Titus"; Meyerbeer, "Ah mon fils" and "Dans ce chateau"; Beethoven, "Ab-cheulicher," from "Fidelio"; Rubinstein, "Eldunque ver"; Rossini, "Bel Raggio"; Mozart, "Letter Aria"; Weber, from "Der Freyschütz"; Duchauer, "Marguerite at the Spinning Wheel," from "Faust."

The following are the soloists, who appeared:

Singers. Mme. Rosa Czillag, Mme. Louise Lichtmay, Miss Clara Louise Kellogg, Miss Mary Krebs, and Miss Louisa Morrison Fiset.

Pianists. Mr. S. B. Mills, Mr. Richard Hoffmann, and Miss Mary Krebs.

Violinist. Dr. Leopold Damrosch.

Clarinet. Mr. E. Boehm.

Violoncellists. Messrs. Bergmann, Bergner, Hoch, and Liesegang.

Mr. Theo. Thomas and his fine orchestra, with Miss Mehlig, give a matinee next week. He opens the Central Park Garden on the 1st of this month.

J. M. W.

## What They Say of the Passion Music.

[From the Daily Advertiser, May 15.]

The Music Hall was again filled on Saturday evening with a most earnest and attentive audience. The programme was devoted to selections from the "St. Matthew Passion Music" of John Sebastian Bach, and to "Sterndale Bennett's oratorio of 'The Woman of Samaria,'" both of which were presented for the first time in America. Of the seventy-eight numbers of the former work sixteen were presented, the selections given including representatives of every form of composition employed in the "Passion Music." The success attending this performance will be found so great, we think, as to warrant the production of the entire work at a not very distant day. In many of its features the "Passion Music," even on a first hearing, is capable of affording the most pure and exalted pleasure to every sensitive and appreciative soul. The recitatives are felt at once to be incomparable, telling as they do the story of the death

and passion of Christ with wonderful simplicity and directness, and yet with the graphic tenderness and intensity of a stricken believer and eye-witness. The great master of tones is perceived in this power to portray and impress through the agency of accompanied recitative, as the great artist in color is detected through the vivid life or the swift change which follows a few simple touches of his brush. The choral numbers of the "Passion Music," also, with scarcely an exception,—if we are wanted to speak from those performed on Saturday evening,—are replete with meaning and beauty, of which much is easily gathered up even by a novice. As specimens of the most marvellous power of harmonic combination, exercised with absolute ease and freedom, and as expressions of every phase of intense religious feeling, they seem incomparable. The full significance of the airs, on the other hand—and this, it occurs to us, is an inversion of the usual experience with unfamiliar music—does not come out so fully upon first acquaintance. The treatment of the melody is, if we may so say, unmelodic, the mere pleasing of the ear being apparently disregarded, or at least subordinated to an expression of the inner thought and feeling of the composer, which transcends the form of ordinary melody.

The numbers of the "Passion Music" which gave the greatest pleasure, we should designate as the alto recitation and aria, "Thou dear Redeemer, thou," and "Grief and Pain"; the solo and chorus beginning, "O Grief! here throbs the racked and bleeding heart"; the bass aria, "Gladly will I, all resigning"; the double chorus, "Ye lightnings, ye thunders, in clouds are ye vanished!" the alto aria, "Oh, pardon me, my God"; and the concluding chorus, "Around thy tomb here sit we weeping." The "Grief and Pain" aria was sung by Mrs. Barry at the Harvard Symphony concerts of this season, and its wonderful depth of pathos reveals itself more and more clearly as familiarity with it increases. The chorus, "Ye lightnings, ye thunders," seems almost without a parallel as a combination of picturesque and emotional power; and the concluding chorus, with its refrain, "Around thy tomb here sit we weeping, and murmur low in tones suppressed—Rest thee softly, softly rest!" leaves an impression of beauty and power which is simply indescribable. The music speaks as with the voice of some loving disciple who, torn with grief at the remembrance of the great agony, can yet rejoice that his Master's sufferings are over, and find in the sleep of the Savior by whose tomb he watches, an earnest of that peace of the faithful soul which passeth all understanding. The solos were principally rendered by Mme. Rudersdorff, Miss Sterling, Mr. Wm. J. Winch and Mr. Whitney. All of these artists acquitted themselves nobly though, with the single exception of Mme. Rudersdorff, they were all somewhat hampered by the immense difficulties of their music, and could not find opportunity for using the highest expressive power of which they are capable. Still, Miss Sterling's rendering of "Grief and Pain," and Mr. Whitney's of "Gladly will I, all resigning," were very earnest and effective. Mme. Rudersdorff's delivery of the very intricate and trying aria, written for a contralto voice, "Oh pardon me, my God," was characterized by complete intelligence and thorough technical skill, and might have been considered perfect but for her extremely bad enunciation of her words, which may perhaps be referred to an imperfect mastery of the English language. An oboe obligato performed by Mr. Eller, in connection with the tenor air: "I'll watch with my dear Jesus," and a violin obligato given by Mr. Bernhard Listemann, in conjunction with Mme. Rudersdorff's aria, were both very skilfully done. The chorus sang almost all their music with admirable accuracy, spirit and understanding. Very general regret was expressed that Mr. Whitney did not present the great air, "Give me back my dearest Master," the rendering of which made so profound an impression at the symphony concerts of last winter.

[From the Journal.]

One performance could not offer to an audience two selections of a religious character each so enjoyable of its kind as Bach's "Passion Music of St. Matthew," and Bennett's "Woman of Samaria." The one full of depth, thoroughly original, and only such as John Sebastian Bach could write; the other comparatively light, pleasing, and, as far as the subject would let it be, sensuous. The former, to be judged by many hearings, or even fairly understood in all its wealth; the latter showing most of its beauties at a single hearing. Bach's music deeply enjoyed by musicians; Bennett's by the public at large.

The Passion music (we must speak in passing of Mr. Dwight's very appreciative translation) was, as far as one can judge from a first hearing, remarkably well done. The chorus sang the difficult music with a precision and power that was hardly expected; the

chorales, "I will stay here beside thee," and "Ye lightnings, ye thunders," a strong emphatic double chorale, were gloriously done, and the latter gained a deserved encore.

Throughout the chorus were steady and are to be congratulated on their success in a new and very difficult field, for seldom have they sung better than in the above mentioned and in the very trying concluding chorale, [chorus] "Around thy Tomb."

Miss Sterling sang, as usual, in sweet voice and pure style, and Mme. Rudersdorff with all the religious feeling the music requires, the two ladies rendering superbly the duet, accompanied by the chorus, which introduces the double chorale, [chorus] "Ye lightnings," &c. Mr. W. J. Winch we thought to be weak in the tenor music, while Mr. Whitney sang with the utmost precision and in true tone, but with less feeling than he commonly displays. Space forbids even a shadow of what is due to the selections from this grand composition, and it only remains to be said that few expected and every one rejoiced at the success of the first part of the programme for Saturday night.

[From the Gazette, May 14.]

If nothing else worthy of fame had been done during the Festival, the production of Bach's *Passion Music*, portions of which formed the first part of last evening's concert, would alone have made the occasion memorable. About a quarter of the work, as published, was sung, the selections made being sufficient to show its trine character of narrative, drama and passion. The story of the passion could not be more succinctly told than in the Scriptural record used for the narrative portions of the work, and so the selections, though made with care and discrimination, could not be otherwise than disjointed. The choruses, which seemed to give the most pleasure, were the one beginning: "Ye thunders, ye lightnings," and the finale, "Around thy Tomb," etc. The vividness of the former electrified the audience, who would not be quieted except by repetition. The seraphic calm breathed forth in the latter was not less impressive. The solos were sung by Mme. Rudersdorff, Miss Sterling, Mr. Whitney (who assumed with becoming dignity and chaste expression the numbers assigned to Jesus,) and Mr. W. J. Winch, who sang the recitatives of the Evangelist and the tenor airs with the most refined taste. Some of the solos had been heard here before, and we were sorry to miss the fine bass air: "Give me back my dearest Master," which Mr. Whitney sang at a recent Harvard concert. A violin obligato, played by Mr. Listemann, and one for oboe, by Mr. Eller, were admirably played. The general satisfaction expressed may yet be taken as an index of a popular willingness to hear, and induce the society to bring out the work entire.

[From the Times.]

Indeed, we should not attempt any critical notice of so great a work as Bach's *Passion Music* after a single hearing, and can only say now that the selections given were of the most interesting and impressive nature, reaching a height of religious feeling and expression that we have heard nowhere else.

[From the Traveller.]

The music, which all predicted would be found heavy and uninteresting, is, in fact, full of beauties, and there is very much in it to interest the listener. It breathes the pure spirit of devotion, and it is a wonderful tone epic on the sufferings and passion of the Saviour. The rendering of the aria, "O pardon me, my God," transposed [?] from the *contralto*, by Mme. Rudersdorff; "Grief and Pain," by Miss Sterling; and the "Gladly will I resign" by Mr. Whitney was in the highest degree artistic, and the different styles of these numbers showed the scope of the composer's powers. The chorus, which was in capital condition, did its work well and thoroughly, and the two choruses, "Ye lightnings, ye thunders, in clouds are ye vanished," and "Around thy tomb here sit we weeping," were given with great effectiveness and in the best style of the society. An oboe obligato by Mr. Eller to the tenor air, "I will watch with my dear Jesus," and a violin obligato by Mr. B. Listemann, to the aria, "O pardon me my God," were delicately and feelingly given. On the whole, the music proved to be more than interesting, though there were some numbers that were quite wearisome.

[From the Transcript.]

Of Bach's *Passion Music*, first heard here on Saturday evening, we have simply to say that the Society had evidently taken to it with genial as well as laborious study, and meant to present it with conscientious skill and feeling. Still, with all advantages of rendering, we doubt if attention was strictly drawn to the music or that its inherent greatness was recognized and understood. There is certainly no appeal

to popular emotion in it, and the style is generally too severe for the average modern taste. In consummate musical treatment it is, of course, of value for the educated; and beyond this there is the spiritual and religious force and a fine dramatic pathos to commend and exalt it. But its traits are sad, suggesting pain and struggle, and the power to typify them in music is summoned from such central and deep thought and profound purpose that the strain to understand the great scope of the work is not overcome by the way-side glimpses of simple melody or the moments of full impassioned harmony and bold instrumental color which happily arrest the ear.

The airs to which we were treated in these extracts of the work were certainly not lacking melody, but it was not of the salient kind and did not generally challenge attention, especially as the singing of them was attended with so much mechanical effort of voice by those who essayed them—Mme. Rudersdorff, Miss Sterling, Mr. W. J. Winch and Mr. Whitney. The great passages of the work accorded at this time were the great double chorus "Ye lightnings, ye thunders," which is graphic in the extreme, and received an encore for its masterly choral treatment; and a further double chorus "Around thy tomb," which is replete with tender beauties and interior fervor, as well as commanding breadth of expression.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAY 20, 1871.

### Second Triennial Festival of the Handel and Haydn Society.

The great musical week has come and gone, leaving impressions which will long enrich the lives of all concerned in it whether as actors or as happy listeners. It was a grand experience. No one has partaken in it who does not feel the better for it. Art in this country, higher culture, love of the beautiful and true, faith in all high and holy things, has surely gained by it. Such a festival is a proud mark of musical and social progress. It shows how much has been accomplished in the education of the musical sense and faculty among the children of the ungenial, utilitarian and prosaic children of the Puritans. It sums up the results of all our culture through the noble Symphonies and Oratorios and Chamber Music we have heard, and through the rudimental musical instruction that pervades our public schools, making the ear and soul sensitive to pure tones artistically woven into a subtle spiritual language, and every school a nursery of fresh, true singers and quick readers for the continual replenishment and renovation of our great choral unions. In such an effort we learn, to our own surprise, how much is possible with good use of the means we have, and are encouraged to still loftier endeavors. When, in addition to the triumphs of past years, to the "Messiah," the "Elijah," the "Hymn of Praise," the "Ninth Symphony," the old Society at length succeeds in a complete production of Handel's "Israel in Egypt," and in awakening a pretty general and heart-felt response, on the first hearing, to numerous selections (over an hour in length) from Bach's "St. Matthew Passion Music," its members may well feel that they need shrink from no really noble task, however difficult, hereafter. They have at least mastered "Israel," and they have practically settled it that the performance of the entire *Passion Music* here within another year or two, and followed up from time to time until it becomes known and loved and takes its place with the "Messiah," is a thing predestined. If the Festival had done nothing more than simply bring but so much of that music so home to the hearts of most who heard it for the first time that night, it would still mark a most important step of progress. (But of this in due order, later; for the present we only point for confirmation of our feeling of the temper in which Bach left that audience, to the generally more than respectful, in some cases very warm and

earnest, mention in the various newspapers from which we have made extracts elsewhere).

A six days' Festival, embracing nine such formidable programmes, was certainly a very ambitious, as well as a most laborious undertaking. But that ambition amply vindicated itself three years ago; and this time, setting its mark still higher, has reached it even more triumphantly. The second Triennial Festival has been more successful (musically) than the first. Of course, there have been imperfections—invariably in so much great work; but weak or faulty details are swallowed up in the impression of a glorious whole; the victory throughout was as complete and fine as any one could have a right to hope. Perhaps the scale was larger than is found necessary for the satisfaction of older and more cultured musical communities; a body of 700 singers cannot undertake all the serious and noble tasks that are within the reach of a select, compact choir of only three or four hundred, since the raw recruits necessitate so much rehearsal of the works familiar to the rest. But on the other hand, we live in a republic, and the people here come in for a share in whatsoever culture or good work of this kind there is going on; within reasonable bounds we need, we rightfully demand some multitudinous song festivals amid the many in which quality is thought of more than quantity; but here we had the latter with no material sacrifice of the former. Perhaps the length of the Festival, the number of concerts crowded into one week, was too great; in Germany they are content with two or three days; but here so short a period would hardly warrant the costly assemblage of such vast forces; once scattered, it is a long time before all the elements can be brought together again; and if it takes but two days for such soul refreshment for the more quiet, art-loving people of the old world, it may well require six days to make the due impression on a bustling, money-making, "fast" community like ours. We need sometimes a whole week's Sabbath (in an ideal, joyful sense, as of the Ninth Symphony).

#### THE OPENING. TUESDAY, MAY 9.

Here, too, we have forestalled the most that we wished to say, in our haste to copy (on the last page) the candid and appreciative record of a New York correspondent. We do not think he overrates the inspiration which possessed alike the singing and the listening masses. It was a noble opening, full of good omen for what was to follow. Yet, could we have selected freely, that miscellaneous First Part should have had a somewhat different programme. The programmes, generally, of the Afternoon (Symphony) concerts, we gratefully acknowledge, were far better than those of the Birmingham and other English Festivals, which are too often wearisome medleys of hacknied Italian opera airs and virtuoso exhibition pieces; at least they were made up almost altogether of good matter, if now and then there chanced to be too much of a good thing. But the opening of the Festival should have been all great. Nothing fitter, or grander, than the "Hymn of Praise," of course, could any one desire, which formed the Second Part. The Fest-Overture by Nicolai, however, had ushered in every Festival (three or four) which we had had before, and it has not the intrinsic charm to warrant so much repetition. The grandeur consists wholly in the Lutheran Chorale: "Ein feste Burg," which, simply sung alone, say once in unison, and once with Bach's four-part harmony, would have proved more edifying than it does followed by all that elaborate, uninspired fugue work for the orchestra, with the weaving in of a second and a trivial subject ("Rule Britannia," or something like it). Indeed, the work as a whole has been pretty generally voted dull and heavy. To be sure it answered one end, that of letting the full sound of the entire assembled force, the 700 singers, the 100 orchestra players, and the great organ, burst upon the ear at once with



startling and stupendous power. But it thrilled and quickened for a moment, only, to follow up the promise with fatigue. Another time, we hope, a greater thing will be selected for this opening service; say Bach's Cantata on that very Chorale, or his *Magnificat*, or the easier *Magnificat* in D, by Durante; and, if these do not employ the whole force of the modern orchestra, what matter, so the music in itself be really sublime, if some of the monster effect batteries be kept in reserve a while?

The vocal solos were naturally dictated by the curiosity to hear the distinguished artists from abroad. Besides, such festivals are costly, and various attractions must be held out to the crowd; and then come in a thousand accidents to give the final shape to any programme with the best intentions. "*Non più mesta*" indeed seemed out of place, although Miss ANNIE CARY sang it capably.

Handel's "Sound an Alarm" introduced the young English tenor, Mr. WM. H. CUMMINGS, who, though he has not the weightiest and most robust sort of tenor, has a very musical, pure, telling voice, most evenly developed, which he commands with ease and certainty, and sings with a refinement, an intelligence, an air of general culture, a fervor, and a real interest in the whole music, not in himself or his own part alone, which seems to have won all hearts at once. With the exception of Sims Reeves, who evidently furnished him the model, we never heard this battle song so powerfully given. A chaste nobility has characterized the style of all his singing. Some, for this very reason, found him cold at first, but were at length won over. Some fine ears were troubled by a shade of false intonation in a note or two; but what of that, when the impression of the whole is beautiful and true? Mr. Cummings is not a mere singer, *vox et preterea nihil*, like so many Italian opera tenors; he is a musician in his instincts and his culture. He has had an organist's education, which is an excellent foundation. A pupil of Mr. Hopkins, of the Temple Church, he was known also, unprofessionally, to sing well. Accident first brought him out in that capacity. Only about seven years ago, Sims Reeves called on him to take his place in *Judas Maccabæus*, and after much hesitation he consented; his success was marked; he was encored in "Sound an alarm," and from that time, after some period of study in Italy, he has been a public singer, mostly in the field of Oratorio.

Madame RUDERSDORFF (this is her maiden name) was born in December, 1822, at Ivanowsky in Russia; but at the age of three years she was taken to Hamburg, where her father was engaged as Concertmaster. Her beautiful voice was formed at an early age through Marianne Sessi; afterwards Banderali and Bordogni became her teachers. After appearing in England and Germany as a concert singer, she made her debut in opera at Karlsruhe in 1841, and was then engaged at Frankfurt-on-the-Main, where she was married. In 1844 to Dr. Küchenmeister, a professor of mathematics. She renounced the stage for a time, but accepted an engagement at Breslau in 1846; afterwards in Berlin from 1852 to 1854, when she removed to London, where she still resides, after a distinguished career, for some time in opera (Mozart's *Donna Anna* was her first rôle in London), but for some years past principally in oratorios and concerts. We heard her in the Birmingham Festival of 1861, where she shared the leading soprano honors with Tietjens, Lemmens Sherrington, &c., and her voice at that time seemed to us more worn than it does now. It must have been glorious once. Of course it is by no means in its prime, but something seems to have renewed its vigor, and there is a freshness and a fervor in her singing and her whole appearance quite remarkable for her age. Her strong side, next to her complete musicianship, is her dramatic fire and the intensity with which she throws herself into the spirit and expression of her song. There is a marvellous vitality about her, and her ear-

nest, sympathetic presence seems to quicken chorus, orchestra and all around her; she is in it all, and seems to act it all out with the rest, and even prompt it. She is at home in all the great music and in every part of it; we verily believe, if need were, she could conduct any of the oratorios, impromptu, orchestra and all. In the piece chosen for her first appearance, she had full scope for all her dramatic energy and fire. The scene in the character of *Medea*, written for her appearance at a Leipzig Gewandhaus concert about two years ago by Randegger, now the foremost Italian teacher of singing in London, (but whose name and music suggest that there is German blood in him), is a long and impassioned outburst of jealous love, revenge and tenderness, on the same scale with Beethoven's "*Ah perfido*," only more extravagant and with a larger proportion of fierce declamatory recitative. It sounds the whole compass of that sort of passion, as well as of the singer's voice, which, while weak in the middle portion, and sometimes inaudible at some distance, often thrills you by its splendid high tones, as well as by its strong deep tones of passion. It was a revelation on her part of superb vocal and dramatic power. The orchestral instrumentation, too, is quite remarkable, and we read that the piece made a great impression in Leipzig, so much so that men like David, Reinecke and Ferdinand Hiller suggested to the author the writing of a Suite or a Symphony. And so the singer came and sang and conquered.

Mendelssohn's part-song: "Farewell to the Forest," as sung by the entire chorus, unaccompanied, was a beautiful, rich, cool, broad mass of euphonious harmony, each of the four parts being positively felt, and everything, in time and tune, in light and shade, in clear, precise enunciation, perfect as one could wish. In the third verse it went alone, without the conductor's wand, steady as clock-work, with no shade of drooping from the pitch. This caused great enthusiasm and it had to be repeated. But considered as a wonderful feat of choral ability, compared with their other efforts, it was an illusion, for it was the easiest thing they had to do. Besides, though it was a pleasant thing enough for an impromptu in an informal, free and easy meeting, it was hardly a fit selection for so great an occasion; the unpretending song was never written to be sung in that way; it was subjecting it to too strong a magnifying lens.—The "Hallelujah" from Beethoven's "Mount of Olives" was sung with great spirit and effectively accompanied.

Of the "Hymn of Praise," Mendelssohn's happiest and most spontaneous great work, which has been given here so often and so well before, we need only say that never before has it been given or received quite so well as this time. The three Symphony movements came out like a warm and breathing picture from that noble orchestra, and all the choruses, even "The night is departing," so swift and intricate that we have doubted the possibility by any great choir of making it quite clear, were clearly and magnificently sung. But the memorable feature was the admirable rendering which Mr. Cummings gave of the Tenor Solo and the Recitative: "Watchman, will the night soon pass?" so full of dramatic earnestness and pathos so beautifully graduated in force, with such intelligence in the pause, the emphasis, and whole expression, and tones so pure and musically modulated; it proved the artist, the true singer, both by instinct and by culture. A very thoughtful, very fervent artist, though some call him cold.

Mme. Rudersdorff, too, in the answer to the Watchman, instead of ringing out the sentence in a clarion tone, sang softly, sweetly: "The night is departing," then repeated the word "departing," with a burst of splendor; and most, we think, were speedily converted to the new reading. The first soprano solo (with chorus): "Praise thou the Lord," was delivered with intense fervor and great brilliancy in the high range of tones. In the lovely Duet: "I waited for the Lord," her dramatic *sforzando* habit was rather in contrast with the even flow of Miss Cary's rich, smooth voice; otherwise it was all but perfect on the part of solos and of chorus.

So much for a glorious beginning!

## SECOND DAY. WEDNESDAY, MAY 10.

AFTERNOON CONCERT, Orchestral and Vocal, with the following programme:

Overture: "Leonora," No. 3.....Beethoven.  
Concerto for Pianoforte, in E flat, with orchestra. "  
Miss Anna Mehlig.  
Cavatina, Se m'abbandoni, "Nittori".....Mercadante.  
Miss Cary.  
Overture: "Genova".....Schumann.

Symphony, in G major.....Haydn.  
Adagio and Allegro, Adagio. Menuetto. Finale.  
Grand Scene: "Andromeda".....Mozart.  
Mme. Rudersdorff.  
Aria: "Una voce poco fa".....Rossini.  
Miss Phillips.  
Les Preludes.....Liszt.

The grand orchestra gave an impressive rendering of the two well chosen Overtures, though lacking something of the spirit, delicacy and precision with which they have been given, after special study, by our Harvard Orchestra alone; nor was the (here) familiar Symphony by Haydn—admirable relief between those Overtures and "Les Preludes"—quite so fine and full of sunshine as we have heard it when Mr. ZERRAHN has had more time to assimilate and school his usual forces. Miss MEHLIG played the greatest of Concertos, if possible, with more delicacy, more subtle power and ideality, more fervent as well as finished, easy mastery than ever before. Miss CARY's Cavatina sounded commonplace and out of place, but she sang it extremely well. Mozart's "Andromeda" Scene, ("Ah, lo previdi"), not from any opera, but one of his twelve grand concert arias, perhaps the greatest and most individual of them all, afforded another noble opportunity for Mme. RUDERSDORFF's impassioned lyric eloquence, and nobly she improved it. One can imagine how she would have sung Donna Anna's great scene: "Or tu sai." The florid "Una voce," made trebly florid by somebody's luxuriant embellishments,—all in good keeping with the spirit of the melody, however—formed Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS's Festival *entrée*. We commonly prefer our great Contralto in broad, sustained *Cantabile*, as more congenial to her large and noble nature; but we must admit that very rarely have we been delighted by so finely finished, even, free and spirited a piece of vocal execution, all the *floriture* being exquisitely perfect, and the whole song full of the right sparkle and *espièglerie*. Liszt's "Symphonic Poem," now grown hacknied and heavy to many of us, seemed superfluous in so rich a programme; its full and ingenious instrumentation, however, furnished argument for the great orchestra in all its faculties, and it was splendidly interpreted. Yet we would fain protest, here and throughout the Festival, against the boisterous valor of that bass trombone.

EVENING: MENDELSSOHN'S "ELIJAH." Now the Music Hall was crowded, for here, more than in any oratorio, the 700 singers were known to be at home and sure. And verily we doubt if ever before such perfect and electrifying chorus singing had been heard in America. Every chorus, great or small, sublime or tender, solemn and devout or graphic and dramatic, went to a charm. "Thanks be to God" nearly took the audience off their feet; and so too was the orchestra superb in that, and indeed throughout. The Double Quartet might have been sung better, but "Cast thy burden upon the Lord" (Mme. Rudersdorff, Miss Phillips, Mr. Cummings and Mr. Whitney) was almost perfect as a piece of Quartet singing; we understand that Mme. R. herself had drilled the voices. But by some strange fatality the Angel Trio, never before entrusted here to three more superior artists, never went so badly! Mr. WHITNEY, with all his weight and dignity of voice and person, is hardly in his best sphere in the music of the Prophet; it seeks too high a level for his best voice; nor did he seem to be so thoroughly alive and in good spirit for so arduous a task as he is sometimes. Yet much of his rendering was very noble and impressive; particularly "It is enough." Mr. CUMMINGS, in the tenor solos, showed the same beauty of voice, the same refined, chaste feeling, suggesting always something in reserve, the same purity of style and sovereign intelligence as before, and still grew in favor, though we do not think we had him at his best that night. Mme. RUDERSDORFF threw an intensity and vigor into the part of the Woman, which made that scene for once quite thrilling, and her rendering of "Hear ye, Israel" and "Be not afraid" was electrifying. Nothing could be more sincerely musical and satisfying than Miss PHILLIPS's singing of "O rest in the Lord." Mrs. HUSTON-WEST, too, did her small parts of the soprano music, that of the Youth, &c., in sweet, clear voice, and with true feeling, excellently well.

And here, having reached one of the climaxes of this great "tidal wave" of song,—in fact, in point of good performance and of popular appreciation, we may say the highest of the week—we must pause. The greater half of our reporter task remains, which is to dispose of such great themes as "Israel in Egypt," the "Ninth Symphony," and Bach's "Passion Music," not to speak of Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," and much good concert matter.

## Opening of the Festival.

## A NEW YORK IMPRESSION.

(Correspondence of the Sun).

BOSTON, MAY 9, 1871.—The Handel and Haydn Society are now quietly holding their Triennial Festival here in Boston. The event is one of the utmost interest in its relation to the art of music, which certainly of all the arts is the one to which we Americans most look as a constant source of happiness.

The Handel and Haydn Society, as most of your readers know, is the oldest institution of the kind in the country, and by far the best. It has nearly 750 zealous singers upon its roll, and every third year they surrender a week of their time in the busy spring to give the public the mature results of what they have most fully accomplished and conquered during the intervening years. This summary of labors nobly prosecuted is now being given in a spirit of such genuine devotion to art that it is deserving of every praise.

These musical festivals owe their origin to England, and date back there nearly ninety years. The cathedral choirs of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford have assembled alternately at these different cathedral towns since the year 1724, holding, I believe, this year their one hundred and forty-seventh annual meeting. The first great Handel commemoration was held at Westminster Abbey in 1784. It lasted five days, numbered some five hundred performers, and was the greatest affair of the kind that had been known up to that date. Of late they have made a practice of holding in England, as well as here in Boston, a triennial Handel festival, but there on a far grander scale. At the festival of 1868, which was given at the Crystal Palace, the audience numbered on one day nearly twenty thousand persons. Christine Nilsson, Mme. Rudersdorff (now singing here), Miss Kellogg, and many other singers of eminence assisted. The chorus consisted of four thousand singers, and the orchestra of five hundred performers.

Of course the Handel and Haydn festival of the Bostonians is on a much smaller scale. In England every body of singers is gathered together that is willing to take part. Here, on the contrary, it is the work of a single society, not accepting any outside aid except in the matter of solo and orchestra. Even so the material is sufficient and more than sufficient for the purpose.

Out of the seven hundred and fifty voices, at least six hundred and fifty are in attendance, and the orchestra numbers upwards of a hundred instruments. In addition to this there is the support of the finest organ in this country, and one of the largest ever constructed. When all these forces are employed, it may readily be imagined that the Boston Music Hall can scarcely contain the sound.

We of New York have somewhat unpleasant associations connected with the words musical festival. Some were once given under that name at Steinway Hall, but they were hired enterprises and had no festival character whatever. Then the Boston Peace Jubilee assumed a half burlesque form in spite of some of its elements of grandeur, and was of more than doubtful benefit to art. Finally came that dreadful and melancholy affair at the Third Avenue Rink, wherein all concerned came to grief, and among them this very Handel and Haydn Society. No wonder that we fail to associate anything very agreeable with the words.

But here it is different. Society is more compact; the pride in the Handel and Haydn is universal; the persons engaged, instead of desiring to make anything out of the matter, are willing to sacrifice much valuable time in its behalf, and to provide against any deficiency, public-spirited merchants, guaranty to make good all losses to the amount of \$50,000. In this spirit the affair is inaugurated. Of course it is quiet and unostentatious. True devotion to art is apt to take that form, and not to proclaim itself boastfully.

At 8 o'clock this (Tue-day) afternoon, then, the festival began. Promptly to the minute the great chorus entered, and each singer assumed his allotted seat. The auditorium was already filled. In the centre and about Mr. Carl Zerrahn, the conductor, the orchestra was grouped, and the rows of singers radiated outward in ascending lines, till the last rows stood upon the topmost benches, with their heads so nearly reaching the third gallery that they looked like a fringe of supporting caryatides.

The programme consisted of miscellaneous concert pieces for the first part, and Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" for the second. The soloists were Mme. Rudersdorff, Miss Annie Cary, and Mr. Cummings. The first and last named are singers whom the Society has engaged to come from England for the purpose of lending their services during the present week, and assuming the principal soprano and tenor parts. Both of them have high reputations abroad as oratorio singers, though not the highest. They have taken conspicuous parts at the great English festivals in London and elsewhere. Miss Cary is the lady whom we have so often heard in New York in connection with Miss Nilsson's concerts.

The following is the programme of the first part of the opening concert:

Nicolai's festival overture on Luther's choral: "Ein feste burg," for orchestra, chorus, and organ.

"Sound an Alarm"—Judas Maccabæus, Handel, Mr. Cummings.

Four-part song, "Farewell to the Forest," Mendelssohn.

By the entire chorus.

"Non Plu Menta," alto aria. Rossini. Miss Cary.

Grand scena, "Medea," Randegger. Mme. Rudersdorff.

The Hallelujah Chorus from "Mount of Olives," Beethoven.

Nicolai's overture was a fitting work with which to open the six days' labor. It is deeply religious in character, devotional and severe. Its groundwork is Luther's mighty choral, introduced in the commencement and afterward at the close, the two parts being connected by a double fugue worked out with much elaborate learning. The better part of it is Luther's; what Nicolai has added awakened respect for his devotional spirit and for his learning, rather than interest for any value that it adds to the great reformer's hymn.

The second piece brought Mr. Cummings before the public. It is scarcely fair to judge of a singer from his first appearance before a new audience. But we can do so far in praise of this gentleman as to say that we do not know of his equal in this country as a tenor singer of oratorio. He is still a young man, and one of undoubted artistic intelligence and refinement. Whatever he sang showed a thorough understanding of his work. If he is in any wise lacking, it is because art has failed to supply what nature denied; in other words, because his acquirements are even rarer than his natural gifts. The words with which the great aria opens, "Sound an Alarm" were given out in long drawn tones which furnished an excellent opportunity to judge of the character of his voice. I did not think the quality of the tone itself remarkably beautiful. It is not in this direction that his superiority seemed to consist, so much as in his great musical intelligence, pure method, easy execution, earnestness, and enthusiasm.

Mendelssohn's four-part song, "Farewell to the Forest," showed how well the chorus had been trained, how nicely the voices were blended, and what delicacy and light and shade the great body of singers were capable of. The song itself is fragrant with the odors of the woods and fields. It is sweetly and charmin'ly graceful and simple. After leading the first two verses, Mr. Zerrahn left his chorus to go on by themselves without any directing hand. The seven hundred were equal to the emergency. The points were taken up with the same accuracy and precision, the expression marks as carefully regarded, and the pronunciation so clear that every word was distinctly intelligible.

Miss Cary then sang the Rossini "rice song," the "Non Plu Menta." She appeared to much greater advantage than when contrasted with and overshadowed by Miss Nilsson, as she has so long been. By contrast then her voice seemed hard and cold, but before this audience of her native city it seemed to gain in warmth and color. Finally came Mme. Rudersdorff, upon whom so much of the interest of the present week will centre. This lady is a truly great and admirable artist. Her singing of Randegger's intense scena is to music what Mme. Seebach's garden scene in "Marie Stuart" is to the drama—grand in conception and splendid in execution. The voice may not be what it once was, but the fire of genius is there. Mme. Parepa could sing a bright, cold aria better, but she never approached Mme. Rudersdorff's fervor. Both in this and in the "Hymn of Praise" which followed, this lady displayed the highest artistic gifts, and I sincerely hope that before she returns to Europe she may be heard in New York in oratorio.

The choruses of the "Hymn of Praise" were superbly rendered. They presented no difficulty which the Society did not fully overcome. The severer tests will come later in the week, when that greatest of choral works, "Israel in Egypt," and also certain portions of Bach's Passion music, are to be given. The concert of this afternoon, indeed, is but the inauguration of the festival; the interest will broaden and deepen as the work goes on, culminating in the performance of the "Messiah" on Sunday night. Besides the evening oratorios there is to be a concert every afternoon.

Among the well-known artists who are to take part during the festival, are Miss Adelaide Phillips, Miss Antoinette Sterling, Miss Anna Mehlig, and Miss Marie Krebs. It is curious to observe our Old Philharmonic players dotted in here and there among the orchestra, playing away as faithfully for Zerrahn as they do for Bergmann. But Zerrahn's hundred is by no means equal to Bergmann's. It has not had the drill, and it is impossible to gather together an orchestra from four or five cities and have the ensemble as perfect as in one accustomed to the same leader. Zerrahn, nevertheless, is a splendid conductor, and does with them all that man can do.

The strength of the festival, however, lies in the finish and in the great extent of its choral work. Besides the "Hymn of Praise" and the "Messiah," the Society is to sing the "Elijah," "Israel in Egypt," Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria," and (parts of) Bach's Passion music during the week. This is a great mass of material for any society to have worked up ready for public performance at one time. When will our Harmonic or Mendelssohn Union be ready to do as much?

OPERAMMERGAU.—The performances of the Passion Plays, or Mysteries, interrupted last year by the war, will be resumed and continued on the 24th of June; the 2nd, 9th, 16th, 25th, and 30th July; the 6th, 14th, 20th, and 27th of August; and the 3rd, 9th, 17th, and 24th September.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC, Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

## Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

The Wood Nymph's Call. 3. G to f. Williams. 60

One of Parepa's songs, and an admirable one; easy, graceful, waits like in movement, requires but a moderate compass and fair execution, and does not fatigue in singing

Souvenir de London. Campana.

A set of 8 pieces, arranged with Italian and English words by W. O. and J. E. Perkins. Of these

No. 4. The Troubadour. 3. F minor to f. 40

" 5. Come. (Vieni). 3. Eb to e. 50

" 6. The Sigh. (Il Sospiro) 3. G to c. 40

with others of the set are noticeable as very easy Italian songs, and well fitted for the first songs in that style for practice.

Oh, list to me. (E conte Mori). 3. F to f. Benoit. 30

With a neat, pretty French finish, and has a bright accompaniment.

I must leave thee, bonnie Katie. 3. F to f. F. Abt. 30

Fine farewell song.

The Heart that once was mine. 3. G to g. 30

M. W. Hackleton. 30

"Where hast thou given

The heart that once was mine?"

Jealous, but pretty.

Some other Day. 3. Ab to f. Offenbach. 30

"Cease, said I, cease I pray,

Nay, nay, nay,

Some other day perhaps I may."

Capital.

I thought his heart was all my own. 3. D to a. Clay. 30

Effective.

Little Sister's gone to sleep. Song and Chorus. 40

2. G to e. E. Christie. 40

"Angels bade our darling come,

Little sister's gone to sleep."

Fine Lithograph title. Like other songs of its kind,

but a very good kind.

Willie and Old Brindle. 3. F to f. M. Keller. 30

Just the thing for "Willie May" or any other wide

awake boy or girl to sing.

She's the fairest. Duet. 2. G to e. J. W. Turner. 30

Uncommonly good, and is easy.

The Merriest girl in the village. 2. C to c. Christie. 40

Fine lithographic title, and good song every way.

Even me. 2. Ab to f. Mrs. B. R. Boylston. 30

A hymn nicely set to music.

Forsake me not. Duet for Treble and Tenor.

From Spohr's "Last Judgment." 5. G to g. 60

A magnificent duet.

## Instrumental.

Morning Mail Galop. 4. Ab. A. Grebeis. 40

The title is not so good as the piece, which is very

spirited and varied in character.

Vesuvius. 4. Eb. G. D. Wilson. 75

One of the best of the author's pieces, and an excellent piece for learners.

Old 96. Waltz. For one or two Guitars. 3. D. 30

Hayden. 30

Favorite waltz, well arranged.

Wanderstunden. (Leisure Hours.) 5. Db. Heller. 40

Played by Wehl at his concerts. Very striking and

original.

The Little Gem Polka. 2. F. J. W. Turner. 30

A perfect "gem" for young players.

Juliet Waltzes. 3. C. Coote. 40

Easy, flowing melody. Among the "better half" of

Coote's compositions

La Sabotiere. Danse aux Sabots. 5. W. Mason. 75

Perfectly elegant. Although a "wooden shoe

dance" it spiritualizes the clapping of the clogs, and

is a very well wrought composition.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to

7. The key is marked with a capital letter, as C, B flat, &c.

A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff,

an italic letter the highest note, if above the staff.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being

two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, (about

one cent for an ordinary piece of music). Persons at a distance

will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense

in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these

rates.



